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Bulgaria
Digest

Churches and Religion

Introduction

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The vast majority of the Bulgarian Nation belongs to the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church, or Greek Catholic Church, which is also the church of the Russians, Greeks, Serbians, Romanians, as well as the Armenians, Syrians, and other Near Eastern nationalities. Second in number is the Moslem religious minority, with the Jewish, Roman Catholic, and Protestant denominations representing only minute fractions of the total population.

Unlike the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church has no central international authority. It consists of several rather loosely-connected national churches which have emerged at one time or another from the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople. It has been the persistent tendency of the various national churches to emancipate themselves as separate entities and cooperate with the respective national states. In the case of Bulgaria, all efforts of the State, from the establishment of the Princedom in 1878 to the Communist seizure of power in 1944, have centered upon the creation of a national church independent of foreign primates and symbolic of national unity. Therefore, Bulgarian legislation, until 1949, was concerned primarily with the nation's Eastern Orthodox Church.

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The Act on Religious Denominations put into effect by

175 In 1232 Kaloyan's successor, Ivan Asen, denounced
195 the union and severed all ties with the Roman Catholic Church.

During the nearly five centuries of Turkish rule (1393-1878) supreme authority over religious matters in the Bulgarian lands was vested in the Patriarch of Constantinople who was recognized very early (15th century) by the Turks as the religious head of all Christians in their empire. A Bulgarian Archbishopric at Ochrida was nevertheless allowed to function untill 1766 when the Greek Patriarch finally prevailed over the Turks to have this last vestige of Bulgarian past abolished.

[656] According to the general principle of the Ottoman law the non-Mohamedan communities enjoyed the jurisdiction not only in the religious matters but also in domestic relations and inheritance. Thus, all the disputes arising in this field among the Bulgarians were in fact judged in the last analysis by the dignitaries of the Patriarch of Constantinople who were predominantly Greek.

After the collapse of the State, the Bulgarian clergy was either banished or eliminated, thus opening a spiritual vacuum which was swiftly filled by the Patriarch's hierarchy, leaving only remote monasteries intact. From these very monasteries were to spring three centuries later (1762) the strong currents of a national Renaissance which finally culminated in religious and cultural emancipation of the Bulgarian nation from the Greek Patriarchate and Political liberation from the Ottoman Empire.

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II. Establishment of a Bulgarian Exarchate and Relations with the Patriarchate of Constantinople

A. Under the Turkish Rule, 1870-1878

With the approval of the Moslem Sultans, the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople maintained a complete religious, and in many instances, cultural control over the areas inhabited by the Bulgarian people. A detailed apparatus was set up manned by appointees of the Patriarch exclusively. Treated as being the spoils of the office, the population was exposed to corruption and threat of Hellenization. Reaction was sporadic until 1762 when an obscure Bulgarian monk, Father Paisiy, published his History of the Bulgarian People and roving the country to let the people copy his book, aroused national pride and consciousness. From then on, the ideas of a separate Bulgarian political and cultural entity gave birth to a movement for national awakening and emancipation. Wisely, it first concentrated on the issue of Greek religious authority over Bulgarian lands versus a national Bulgarian church within the Turkish Empire. The issue came to a climax in the events of 1870-1872.

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In 1870, the Turkish Government finally intervened in the religious dispute between the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Bulgarian population under its jurisdiction and issued an Imperial Decree (Firman) which recognized the validity of the Bulgarians' claim to an independent ecclesiastical authority and provided for the establishment of an autonomous Bulgarian Exarchate. In designating the area of jurisdiction of the new

656 795 175 Church, the Firman enumerated some of the Bulgarian-populated regions and provided for the holding of a plebiscite to determine the preference of the rest of the Bulgarian lands:

> If the population of any other places besides those enumerated above, and professing the Orthodox faith, should wish unanimously or at least by a two-thirds majority to be subject to the Bulgarian Exarchate, and if subsequent investigation should prove this to be so, their desire should be gratified (Article 10).*

795 In the following year, an all-Bulgarian church council convened at Constantinople to lay the foundations of a national Bulgarian church. The council met with stubborn opposition on the part of the Patriarchate which, claiming the status of an ecumenical church, refused to consent to the proposed creation of a church on the principle of nationality. The formula of the Ottoman Government in the Firman of 1870 whereby the Exarchate, though autonomous, was to recognize the primacy of the Patriarchate, would have avoided all the conflict if it had not been for the issue of the Exarch's residence. Supported by the Ottoman government, the Bulgarian council took the stand that the residence of the Exarch must be in Constantinople, capital of the Ottoman Empire and seat of the Patriarchate. The Patriarchate opposed the Exarch's having a seat in the same locality as the Patriarch himself.

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* The full text of this important document is in Stoyan Protic, The Aspirations of Bulgaria (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton and Co., 1915), appendix.

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The conflict was aggravated when the Patriarchate refused to recognize the Statute of Exarchate drafted by the Bulgarian Church Council. One of the objectionable points was the new method of filling the positions in the hierarchy of the Bulgarian Church. All prelates in the Bulgarian lands were hitherto appointed by the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Under the Statute of the Exarchate the Bishops were to be elected by the diocesans, and the Exarch, by the highest dignitaries of the Church with the participation of representatives of the laymen.

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The refusal of the Patriarchate to recognize the Exarchate and its Statute provoked a schism, or split, between the Patriarchate and the Bulgarian Church. This split, between the Patriarchate and the Bulgarian Church. This split lasted until 1945 when a reconciliation was negotiated and achieved.

In spite of he fierce opposition of the Greek clergy and the Patriarchate in Constantinople, the Bulgarian regions (Danube province with the capital in Rushtchuk, and Nishava province with the capital in Nish), as well as most of Macedonia and Thrace, voted to submit themselves to the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Exarchate. An Exarch was elected by the Bulgarian Church Council, and with the consent of the sublime Porte established his seat in Constantinople.

This unique plebiscite, which emancipated the Bulgarian nation from Greek ecclesiastic domination, became

795 the symbol of the religious and cultural unity of the Bulgarian nation and constituted the prelude to its political liberation in 1878.

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B. From the Creation of Princedom to the Balkan Wars, 1878-1913

Under the treaty of Berlin which settled the issues raised by the Russo-Turkish War in 1877-1878, the provinces of the Turkish Empire with predominant Bulgarian population were not included in one body politic. Two regions were incorporated into Romania (Dobrudja) and Serbia (Morava region).*

Moreover, two large Bulgarian provinces, Thrace and Macedonia, remained within the Ottoman Empire. The rest assigned to the Bulgarians and at first formed two political entities: Princedom of Bulgaria, including the regions between the Danube River and the Balkan range (present Northern Bulgaria) and was placed under the nominal sovereignty of the Turkish Sultan. In the region south of the Balkans (present Southern Bulgaria) an autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire - Eastern

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* Dobrudja was given to Romania in compensation for the loss of Bessarabia annexed by Russia. The regions east of Morava River with the city of Nish were given to Serbia. This met the aspiration of Austria-Hungary to divert Serbian attention from the Slavs in Bosnia and Herzegovina occupied by Austro-Hungarian Empire and annexed in 1908.

115 131 Rumelia - was formed but it joined, in 1885, the Princedom of Bulgaria and severed all ties with Turkey.

Thus, in fact, there were two Bulgarian churches: 795 that of the Princedom of Bulgaria, no longer under the authority of the Ottoman Empire, and that of Turkey, which lay outside the jurisdiction of the new Princedom. A reorganization of the Exarchate was imperative but not easy to achieve. There was at first a provisional, more or less arbitrary, ecclesiastical organization. This situation lasted until 1882; a compromise was then reached and in 1883, the Sobranie (National Assembly or legislature) of the Princedom prepared a draft of a statute for the Exarchate for the territory of the Princedom. The final wording of the Statute was not completed until 1895.

Under this statute the Church was administered by both the Exarch in Constantinople and the Holy Synod, or Council, established in Sofia. All matters involving the Bulgarian Church in the Princedom were submitted to the Exarch through the Holy Synod or decided by the Synod itself. The Exarch administered directly the affairs of the Bulgarian churches in the provinces remaining in the Ottoman Empire, including Macedonia and Thrace. However, the hope was never given up by the Bulgarian churchmen and people that one day Macedonia and Thrace would join Bulgaria and thus the reunion of the Exarch with the Synod would be made possible.

These hopes were not fulfilled as is explained infra. The statute was amended several times but the amendments were of minor importance and dealt only with current, purely administrative problems.

659 ever occurred, not even military parades, without the blessing and prominent presence of the representatives of the Church.

Thus, a close cooperation was established between the State and the Church, and the Bulgarian people considered it quite important even though Bulgarians were not very religious. The Bulgarian people saw in the church a national institution for which they had fought bitterly before they had obtained statehood, and which was a source of encouragement in good and of solace in bad days. These were not two separate concepts but actually two parts of one and the same national concept. Given this union it is not at all astonishing that some prelates temporarily left their religious duties and assumed political or diplomatic functions, as it was the case, immediately after the liberation of Bulgaria, of Clement, the Bishop of Stara Zagora, who in 1879-80 was Prime Minister for several months and later headed the Bulgarian delegations frequently sent to St. Petersburg before the Russian Tzar. In later times and during World War II, two bishops, Stefan of Sofia (a Russophile) and Paisii of Vratza (a germanophile), became notorious by their endeavors to play a part in politics and aspire to the position of Prime Minister.

B. Ecclesiastic Courts, Marriage and Divorce*

●795 692 Not being separated from the State, the Bulgarian Church performed, up to the advent of the communist regime, certain public functions. Religious celebration was required for the validity of a marriage, vital statistics were kept by the clergy and even the legal questions of marriage and divorce

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692 were under the jurisdiction of ecclesiastic courts. The participation of laymen in these courts rendered them national and democratic in character.

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* The matter is treated in Part VI of the Statute of the Exarchate, completed only in 1897 and passed by the National Assembly the same year (Durzhaven Vestnik, No. 85, April 22, 1897).

B. The General Law of 1949

1. Summary and Analysis

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The Communist Government promulgated, on March 1, 1949, a general law on the religious denominations in the country (Durzhaven Vestnik, No. 48, March 1, 1949). The full text of the law is given infra, (2). This law was promulgated while the trial of the Protestant pastors was in progress. Although it recognizes that the "Bulgarian Orthodox Church is the traditional religion of the Bulgarian people associated with its history" and suggest that "it may become the people's democratic church" (Section 3), the law introduces a uniform regime for all denominations, the over-all detailed control of which is vested in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. While it restates the constitutional provisions for freedom of conscience and religion and separation of church and state, the law recognizes only the exercise of "religious rituals" (Section 2) and makes no mention of activities for the propagation of the faith. To exist, a denomination requires recognition by the government granted through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Section 6) subject to arbitrary withdrawal. Recognition by the government of a denomination carries with it the status of a legal entity for its church.

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The governing bodies of the denominations are responsible before the government (Section 9) and must be composed of Bulgarian nationals (Section 10). Clergymen who "act against the democratic institutions of the state" may be

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795 removed from office upon the request of the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Section 12).

In financial matters, the annual budgets of the denominations must be submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; "when necessary, the state may subsidize them (the denominations)" (Section 13). All financial, hierarchical or personal relations with institutions abroad must be conducted through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Section 22 and 24).

The denominations are permitted to open schools for the training of ministers subject to control by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Section 14) but cannot maintain hospitals, orphanages and the like (Section 21). All messages, circular letters and publications issued by the denominations are subject to previous approval by the same Ministry which may stop such publications (Section 15).

An important feature of the new regime of denominational control is the registration of the governing bodies with the public authorities (Section 16). Furthermore, religious institutions established abroad cannot have subdivisions in the country; all such subdivisions are to be closed within one month from the promulgation of the law (Section 23). Within the same period the denominations must submit lists of their ministers to the Minister of Foreign Affairs which may request the dismissal of any one found objectionable (Section 31).

671 to confirm the statute.

Section 31

Within a month from the date on which the present law takes effect, the central directive agency of each denomination must submit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs rosters of their ministers and religious representatives; these may retain their positions if the Minister of Foreign Affairs raises no objection.

Objections may be raised against those ministers who do not fulfill the qualifications established by the present law.

Section 32

The present law repeals all legislation which contradicts it.

The carrying out of the present Ukase shall be entrusted to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

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V. Minority Denominations

There are four minority denominations in Bulgaria: Mohammedan, Jewish, Protestant and Catholic. Each has its religious communities, which are administered by a Central Authority established in Sofia, with the exception of the Protestants who are subdivided into several groups (Methodists, Baptist, Episcopal, Etc.), each with its own Administrative Authority.

A. Mohammedan Minority

Of the minority denominations the Mohammedan has been and is the most numerous. It numbers more than 600,000

795 faithful and is politically important because of its ties with Turkey. It must be noted, however, that since the Balkan War the Turkish population in Bulgaria has continously been emigrating to Turkey.

167 175 The emigration of the Moslem population from Bulgaria to Turkey began with the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. Most of the Turks living in the cities left Bulgaria immediately. They were slowly followed by the peasant element. The Turkish Government did not encourage this emigration. Under Sultan Abdul Hamid's rule the Turkish authorities were always suspicious of Moslem immigrants from the newly-liberated countries where they had lived under much more liberal conditions and had learned to value freedom and rights - two things which were not allowed in the Turkish Empire. There was another for this attitude. Turkey was greatly interest in keeping abroad a large and compact Moslem minority. They remained under the religious rule of the Cheikh-ul-Islam of Constantinople and could be of invaluable assistance in a Bulgarian-Turkish conflict, as they could not fail to respond to the appeal of their religious leader. But with the gradual stabilization of the situation the religious fanaticism of these Moslems weakened, and the passive character of the Turkish race led them to become loyal subjects of the Bulgarian State.

The Balkan Wars of 1912-13 caused the disappearance of Turkey from Europe. World War I, following a year later, brought about the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire whose

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(viel) for women, and the change from the Arabic to the Latin 167
alphabet. 175

These fundamental reforms provoked a schism at
first, and for a long time Mustafa Kemal and his followers were 175
considered infidels by other Moslems. The Bulgarian Government, 563
keenly aware of the potential menace presented by the compact
and numerous Turkish minority, was only too happy to exploit
this schism, which caused the Turks in Bulgaria to turn away
from Ankara and Constantinople.

Bulgaria refused to exert any pressure on the Moslem 659
minority to force it to organize its social and religious life 175
along the lines advocated by the Kemalists. The Moslems were 563
left entirely free to keep the Sheriat and the Arabic alphabet. 795
Nothing was changed in the Turkish clergy and schools in 793
Bulgaria. This was all the easier to effect because the
separation of the Church and State, which is the core of the
Kemalist reforms, had long been realized in Bulgaria by the
very fact of the establishment of the Christian Bulgarian
State side by side with an ethnically foreign Moslem minority.

Left entirely to itself, this minority, whose
nationality and religion have always been scrupulously respected,
organized itself on the basis of the Sheriat, which governed
every phase of its civic and religious life, particularly in
matrimonial matters - marriage and divorce (i. e., repudiation
of the wife by the husband), as well as in the matters of
inheritance.

This organization, which developed side by side with

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the Bulgarian State, was maintained by the Bulgarian authorities by means of the institution of the muftis, whose network covered all the Turkish-inhabited regions and which was centered at Sofia in the person of a Great Mufti, elected by the regional muftis. The Great Mufti was assisted by a Council elected by all the Moslems in the country. Thus, the Turkish minority not only enjoyed equal political rights with other citizens, but also was provided with a system of self-government concerning all matters regulated by the Sheriat. Such was the privileged position of the great Moslem community, which was able to support a considerable number of mosques (no less than two thousand) and schools (more than one thousand) and to publish several newspapers in its own language.

The Kemalists were extremely dissatisfied with this state of affairs. It frustrated the expansion of their reforms beyond the frontiers of Turkey. The Government in Sofia, however, took a firm stand and refused to change anything in the direction desired by Ankara. What was more, the Turks in Bulgaria, being a compact and a large group, were a source of votes for the politicians, who did much to raise their primitive standard of living. Great projects were carried out by the Bulgarian State over several years whose purpose it was to provide drinking water and irrigation for the arid region of Deliorman (Northeastern Bulgaria) predominantly populated by Turks. [312]

B. Jewish Minority

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The Jews in Bulgaria numbered about 50,000 and came originally from Spain. Until the last war they lived in absolute liberty and enjoyed all the rights of Bulgarian citizens. The Jewish colony maintained about 30 synagogues, of which seven are in Sofia, three in Plovdiv, two in Pleven, one in Vidin, one in Vratza, etc., and a consistory composed of preeminent men, the most notable of whom was the great Rabbi Dr. Ehrenpreiss (actually residing in Stockholm). For more than fifteen years Dr. Ehrenpreiss made a center of his residence from which Hebrew culture was propagated not only in the Balkans but in Eastern Europe as well.

The Jews not only were not persecuted, but also enjoyed the sympathy of the local population. This explains the fact that, although not numerous, they controlled the greater part of Bulgarian commerce, both domestic and foreign. The relations between Bulgarians and Jews were excellent, and sometimes went even as far as inter-marriage. The wife of the last Bulgarian Minister to the United States, Dr. Mevorah, who is of Jewish descent, is a Bulgarian.

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This harmony was not disturbed even after Hitler's seizure of power in Germany when, under the influence of the new regime in the Reich, national-socialist and fascist groups were also organized in Bulgaria. These groups endeavored, among other things, to incite anti-Jewish feelings among the

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tied to the Communist Party and the present government. It is, therefore, not to be expected that they will leave Bulgaria. It must be noted, however, that by means of this organized emigration to the State of Israel, the Russians, who are the masters in Bulgaria, have succeeded in sending there a rather large number of communists and they played an important part in that country in favor of a pro-soviet orientation.

C. Roman Catholic Church

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The Roman Catholic Church was one of the most influential although Roman Catholics were not numerous in Bulgaria. Indeed, Catholicism penetrated Bulgaria as early as the XVII century. It did not come directly from Rome, but through the intermediary of the then powerful Austrian monarchy, which sought to expand into Southeastern Europe and which, in order to realize the goals of that policy, was promising the Bulgarian people to liberate them from the Turkish rule at a time when Russia had not yet entered the International arena.

The pioneers of that denomination were then Bulgarian merchants with connections abroad who often visited the Dalmatian port Dubrovnik (Raguza), an important cultural center at the time. There they were won to the idea of the liberation of Bulgaria with the help of Catholic Austria, an idea encouraged by the Vatican authorities, and they frequented Vienna and Rome for political conferences. Such merchants came mostly from the small but rich town Tchiprovtsi, in the present region of Vratsa,

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in northwestern Bulgaria. Consequently, Catholicism spread in the region and town of Plovdiv, in southern Bulgaria. These are the two main Catholic centers in Bulgaria to which Sofia must be added not because it has a large Catholic population, but because the old King Ferdinand was Catholic and favored Catholicism. There were, therefore, two Catholic Churches in Sofia. Also, the Catholic Bishop, religious head of all, though no numerous, Bulgarian Catholics, had his seat there where the Pope likewise maintained an Apostolic Nuncio as his representative to the Bulgarian Government and the Bulgarian court.

Another Catholic current penetrated the Bulgarian provinces during the second half of the XI^ century, this time via Constantinople. This was at the time when the Bulgarian nation was engaged in the fight for its religious emancipation. The country had already been convinced that liberation was going to come only from Russia, but Russian diplomacy at first refused to support the demand for the creation of an autonomous Bulgarian Church. It threatened to cause a schism in the Orthodox world because of the uncompromising attitude of the Constantinople Patriarchate, which insisted on its ecumenical. Jurisdiction as opposed to the national principle in religious affairs. In view of this situation a certain number of Bulgarians reacted to that opposition by soliciting the protection of the Vatican in the hope that this protection would help to draw the attention of Europe and induce it to take an interest in the fate of the Bulgarian people and also expedite their religious and political liberation.

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Thus, in 1859, the inhabitants of the Macedonian towns of Doiran and of Kukush (Kilkish), north of Saloniki, now in Yugoslav and Greek lands, respectively, left the Patriarchate to form a Bulgarian Uniate Church which registered some gains in Macedonia and Thrace, particularly in Adrianople, between 1860 - 1870, before the Bulgarian Exarchate was established. In these two regions the Vatican appointed bishops for the dioceses which were established there, and toward the end of that decade, a young Bulgarian patriot, Dragan Tzankoff, who later was to play a considerable part in the political life of the Principedom of Bulgaria at the head of the liberal party, began serious negotiations with the Vatican for the incorporation of the entire Bulgarian nation into the Roman Church as a Uniate Church. A Uniate Archbishopric was established, but proved to be of short life. The Turkish government authorized rather the establishment of the Exarchate as the Bulgarian National Church.

The Bulgarian Uniates, like the Uniates in the Ukraine and in Byelorussia, constituted a special branch of Catholics. They preserved the dogmas and rituals and other religious rules of the Eastern Church, but accepted the supreme authority of the Pope, praying for him during the Mass and mentioning him as the supreme church authority instead of the Patriarch, and later, the Exarch.

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The Uniate movement was centered around Saloniki and directed from Constantinople. It rendered great services to the Bulgarian population in Macedonia and Thrace under the

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Ottoman Empire. Its influence was greatest in the vilayet (province) of Salonika. A great cathedral was erected in that city in 1878 to replace the little chapel which had until then served the small Catholic community. The same soon took place in Adrianople. The Uniate communities of these two cities, with the authorization of the Turkish authorities and the material support of the Vatican, founded primary and secondary schools for their children. These schools helped considerably the Bulgarian population, exposed immediately after the Russo-Turkish War of 1878 to the double persecutions by the Greek clergy, who were trying to detach it from the Exarchate. The Catholic educational institutions educated a great number of indigent children who later made powerful contributions to the cultural progress of the Bulgarian Nation.

Several religious missions came to these regions from Rome, and, once established, did some beneficial work. Two of them particularly distinguished themselves. One was the Order of St. Vincent of Paul of the Brothers and Sisters of Charity, which acquired the estate of Zeitinlik, two kilometers from the Vardar Gate of Salonika, on the road to Serres and where they erected the vast buildings of the "Bulgarian Catholic School of St. Cyril and Methodius", circled by a great wall; the other was the school of the two italian clerics, Brother Guiseppe Aloati and Sister Chrisino Aloati, of Turin, who, in 1892, bought a large farm, near the village of Palortzi, in the region of Ghevgheli, in Macedonia, actually located on the Greek-Yugoslav border on which they founded an orphanage with a convent school for nurses and one for home economics, and

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where many Bulgarian children of Southern Macedonia found asylum, especially after the great insurrection of August 1903. After the Balkan War, which Bulgaria fought for the liberation of her national territories of Macedonia and Thrace from Turkish rule, but which ended disastrously for her, these two important centers of education for the Bulgarian youths were suppressed, the school buildings and their grounds having been seized by the Greek and Serbian authorities, which likewise forced all other Bulgarian schools under their jurisdiction to be closed. This brutal occupation was resented by the local population, and many disgraceful scenes took place, such as the suppression of the school in Palortzi. The order stated that instructions be changed from the Bulgarian to the Serbian language; Father and Sister Aleati declared that when they established the school, they had found nothing but Bulgarian children in that region and that, for this reason, they could not fail in their duty to teach these children in their own Bulgarian language. This courageous declaration was unanimously supported by the students, who declared that they were Bulgarians and that they had no desire to learn the Serbian language. The order to change the language which was repeated several times was not carried out. One day a detachment of Serbian police invaded the grounds of the school with the official notice that either the curriculum was going to be Serbianized, or the school was to be evacuated immediately. The teachers and students remained firm in their attitude and preferred

exile to renunciation of the Bulgarian character of the school. With their few belongings that they managed to salvage, they sought refuge in Bulgaria. 795 797 563

The Uniate movement did not expand after the establishment of the Exarchate in 1871 and the creation of a Bulgarian State in 1879. The towns of Adrianople and Kukush were devastated and almost destroyed by the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913. Turkey and Greece soon thereafter expelled most of the Bulgarian population of these regions. The Uniates among them were dispersed throughout Bulgaria and disappeared as an organized religious community. 795 175

Between the two world wars a powerful Catholic action was begun by Italy in the Balkans and particularly in Bulgaria. This action was carried out by a special religious organization called "Pro Oriente". It did not, however, pursue religious aims but pure Italian propaganda and there is beyond the scope of this report.

The foreign denominations, however, have even enjoyed the greatest freedom in Bulgaria, this freedom being consecrated by the Constitution itself (see supra) and were under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which also took care of the ecclesiastic affairs of the Bulgarian Church. The Constitution of 1879 had created in this Ministry a bureau in charge of the denominations. 656

The need for a special law for the foreign denominations was not even felt under the pre-war regime. Such a law was not 671

promulgated until 1949. Sections 5, 7-15, 17, 18, 20-24, 28, 671
30, and 31 of this law especially affect the Roman Catholic Church.

D. Protestant Church

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The activities of the Protestant Churches are described in more detail in Appendix B. No law was disclosed which would specifically regulate the position of the Protestant Church in Bulgaria. The activity of this church was primarily educational, that is, the Protestants opened and conducted several private schools in Bulgaria. They did not come under some special denominational churches which were treated like any other private schools. For this reason such activities are being reported in a separate appendix to this digest, which is primarily designed to give a picture of the legal status of the church.

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ambitious nature, Mgr. Stefan wanted to play an important part in that scheme. That is why he offered his services to Alexis, whom he charmed and in whose person, moreover, he wanted to have a champion among the communists. Nevertheless, in doing so, he was also following the tradition established during the long period of the schism when the Russian Church had always supported the Bulgarian Church, for which the Bulgarians were quite thankful.

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Alexis was soon to visit the Holy Land, and Stefan, who would have to pay a visit to the Patriarch in Constantinople after the lifting of the schism, suggested that that visit coincide with that of his big brother, on the latter's return from the Holy Land, in such fashion that the two would meet in Constantinople as guests of the Ecumenical Patriarch and affirm a soviet moral protectorate over the Eastern Orthodox Christians in the Orient, which was to facilitate the expansion of soviet political influence.

This scheme failed. The Turkish Government was highly disturbed by the announcement of Alexis' journey; and the Constantinople Patriarchate, fearing the consequences of the projected visit, asked the Moscow Patriarch to postpone it.

This was all taking place while the political group, known as the E.A.M. in Greece, which was communist dominated, still had hopes of seizing power through peaceful means, with the active support of the U.S.S.R., of course.

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The negotiations with the Greek Patriarchate, which

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The negotiations with the Greek Patriarchate which
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although still called "Ecumenical", actually was reduced to a few dioceses in and around Constantinople, were carried on rather smoothly. The reconciliation of the two rival churches had been in preparation for a long time by the march of the events. The rivalry itself had no foundation any more. The defeat of the Greek expeditionary forces at the hands of Kemal Ataturk in their attempt at restoring the Byzantine Empire of the old days had had, as a consequence, the disappearance of Greek religious supremacy in the Orthodox world. As to the Bulgarians, the loss of Thrace and Macedonia had left them little to dispute about with the Patriarchate of Phanar. Moreover, the Greek-Bulgarian ecclesiastic quarrel was far less of a dogmatic nature than that of a political nature, and one may even say, a purely administrative one.

In effect, the canons of the Orthodox faith forbade the presence of two religious leaders of the same denomination in one town. It is on the basis of that rule that the Patriarchate had opposed, in 1871, the establishment of the See of the Bulgarian Exarch in Constantinople. However, at that time all Bulgarian lands were still under Ottoman rule, and there was no other place the Exarchate could go and still be in direct contact with the Turkish Government as its capital. Since that period, things have changed radically, and now there is no need for the presence of the Bulgarian Exarch in Constantinople. Furthermore, the Patriarchate was willing to recognize the complete independence of the Bulgarian Church, which it

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was ready to proclaim autocephalous under an Exarch or a Patriarch, as the Bulgarians would have it.

On such a basis, an agreement was soon reached, and on February 23, 1945, a protocol was signed by the Patriarch and the Bulgarian delegates, and ratified by the Holy Synods of the two churches. The schism separating the Bulgarian Church from the Patriarchate since 1871 was eliminated.

This result was greatly facilitated by the favorable attitude of Patriarch Benjamino himself. Sensing the end of his days was drawing nearer, he was determined to carry out the task of reconciliation and pacification before his death. He came from the southern part of Macedonia (incorporated into Greece in 1913), and there are good reasons to consider him as a Bulgarian. He had not lost his national feeling and wanted to express that feeling by taking the intiative of the rapproahement between the Greeks and the Bulgarians. His moral strength is all the more outstanding in view of his weak physical condition. The Apostolic Nuncio in Constantinople has said of him and his ideal: "that old man rises above the contingencies of everyday life in the pursuit of a great ideal in the service of God and of Humanity."

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The protocol of February 23 was to recive a solemn confirmation by a visit of Exarch Stefan to Patriarch Benjamin. that visit was delayed by events until the second half of October 1945. In the meantime, the Patriarch suffered two heart attacks, and the composition of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate had

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been altered by one of the periodical re-shufflings, which had removed precisely the most zealous supporters of the reconciliation. The Patriarch had enough strength to impose the continued adherence to the decisions which had been made, but the atmosphere was not at all the same. Stefan's visit to Alexis and the fact that he arrived in Constantinople (Istanbul) as it were directly from Moscow, were widely exploited to cause alarm and suspicion in the old Ottoman capital where a Russian-Bulgarian maneuver aimed at gaining moral control of the city was always feared. These fears were tacitly shared by the Turkish Government, and consequently, there were many obstacles to be removed. Nevertheless, Mgr. Stefan's visit was very successful in the outcome.

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Sofia tried to exploit that success and to widen the work of reconciliation to the peoples themselves, and not only to the churches. On October 30, 1945, Exarch Stefan handed to the Patriarch a short memorandum, in which the Bulgarian Government was asking the Patriarch to intercede before the Regent of Greece, Mgr. Damaskinos, in favor of the normalization of Greek-Bulgarian relations. Bulgaria declared her readiness to repair all damages effectively caused by Bulgarian occupation authorities, taking into consideration, however, the public utility projects which the Bulgarians had undertaken in Greece. Bulgaria asserted that she had no purpose other than to establish friendly conditions of cooperation between the two countries.

To that Mgr. Damaskinos, then head of the Greek State, gave an evasive reply. He approved the lifting of the schism

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government, which intended to make the Church its tool, both in and out of the country, when it was rapidly becoming the center of opposition, especially after the suppression of the political opposition in the Sobranie. To these demands, Mgr. Stefan had to give satisfaction, albeit half-heartedly, and in so doing, he provoked the ire of both the clergy and the people. On the other hand, to complicate things further, he took a dim view of the activities of the Holy Synod, and wanted to decide everything alone.

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Thus, while he was in Istanbul, he informed Patriarch Benjamin of his intention to proclaim himself Patriarch in 1917 and invited him to send delegates to attend the ceremonies which he planned. In this he acted without consulting either the government of the Synod, and, quite naturally, both protested when he returned to Bulgaria and declared that they disagreed with him, and that they considered the transformation of the Exarchate into a Patriarchate an untimely step. The conflict which opposed him to the government on the one hand, and to the Holy Synod on the other hand, went from bad to worse, especially after the separation of Church and State had been decreed officially by the adoption of the new Constitution at the end of 1947. Mgr. Stefan thus literally found himself between the hammer and the anvil. Moreover, because of his personally aggressive attitude towards the other prelates, which made him attempt to dictate to his friends and to crush his opponents, the two forces finally joined against him. On

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September 6, 1948, following an incident with the communists, he saw himself placed in the position where he had to hand in his resignation to the Holy Synod which accepted it unanimously with the support of the government, which did nothing to prepare for the election of a new Exarch. The Holy Synod, taking full charge again of the Church, did more than accept the resignation of Mgr. Stefan. By applying the last amendment of the Statute of the Exarchat (Durzhaven Vestnik, No. 108, May 12, 1945) which definitely linked the office of the Exarch with that of the Archbishop Primate of Sofia, it deprived him of his diocese, reserved for the new Exarch, and relegated him as a virtual prisoner to the surroundings of the small provincial town of Karlovo, where the government permitted him to establish himself in a castle which had once been the property of the late King Boris. His health, by the way, was particularly precarious.

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The decision of the Holy Synod really amounts to a deposition of the Exarch, rather than as an acceptance of his resignation. It was the revenge of the Synod, whom Mgr. Stefan had systematically ignored in his ambition to arrive at a personal and arbitrary rule over the Church, contrary to the very spirit of the Statute of the Exarchate, which had established the Bulgarian Church on an essentially democratic and national basis.

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school. By this time the missionaries felt their theological training school should be more available for Asiatic Turkey and away from a big city. Therefore, the theological school was moved into Asia Minor. About the same time, in 1863, a Mr. Christopher R. Robert of New York, was urging Dr. Hamlin to found a Christian college to furnish higher education for all races in the Turkish Empire. So in 1863 the Robert College was founded, which was to educate and train future Bulgarians.

In 1845 a girls' boarding school was started by the missionaries in Constantinople with two pupils. This later became the well-known and important "American College for Girls at Constantinople", in 1872.

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Many Armenians became attracted to the new form of Christianity and after some time the Orthodox Armenians began severe persecution of their "evangelicals" and finally resorted to excommunication. This treatment caused the organization of the first Protestant Church on July 1, 1846, in Constantinople.

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The American Board began its work in European Turkey in 1858. For some time attention had been turned to this part of the Empire as a strategic missionary field.

Dr. Hamilin of the school at Bebek, on a visit to England in 1856, enlisted the substantial aid of friends there, notably the Earl of Shaftesbury and the Turkish Missions Aid Society in the needy and important lands which Turkey held in Europe.

It was felt that in this middle ground between East

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Here an appeal to the new law of religious liberty in Turkey, together with the help of friendly officials brought good results even from persecution.

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One of the best-known contributions of the Protestants to Bulgaria began as a little mission school for young men in 1860. It was called "The Collegiate and Theological Institute" and started with four pupils. It was shifted to several locations and was closed temporarily during troublesome times, but was finally reestablished in 1871 at Samokov. The mission school for girls was also moved to Samokov that same year.

Samokov was chosen as a more promising town at that time. The climate was much better than in the hot district around Plovdiv. There were still no railroads in the country, and Sofia was an insignificant little place. There were prospering iron mines at Samokov and the place seemed one that would grow in the future.

Both boarding schools increased in attendance and in influence.

On June 30, 1871, the initial annual meeting of the European Turkey Mission was held at Stara Zagora. To this meeting the scholarly Dr. Riggs of Constantinople brought the first bound volume of theBulgarian Bible. At this meeting the "European Turkey Mission" was organized. It was the first mission of the Board that, from the beginning, had the Bible in the language which the people could understand.

In 1871 the first evangelical church in Macedonia was organized at Bansko

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000 consider himself outside danger.

• 795 The principal sects of Protestants now working in Bulgaria are the Congregationalists, the Methodists, the Baptists, and the Pentecostalists.

These are all native Bulgarian, as their foreign representatives have been sent out.

In numbers, the membership in the churches is small. However, there is much interest at present in the "better" denominations, no doubt as a direct result of the present war tension in the country. The work of the churches is limited to meetings in their church buildings. These meetings are "supervised" always by someone from the Communist Party, but attendance is especially large. The pastors officiating are chosen carefully with the idea of conforming with the government, yet they are allowed to preach sermons.

None of the schools started by the Protestant work are functioning at present in Bulgaria, except that at Pordim which is run by the government.

There is evidence that, in spite of the terror exercised by the Communists in Bulgaria, the Protestants will continue to have their churches. Many Protestants will remain loyal to their beliefs and will suffer quietly, as all good Bulgarians are now doing, hoping for the day of a real liberation that will bring freedom to the conscience again.

000 Prepared by: Nicolas Antonoff
In Collaboration with Marin Pundeff
Edited by: Vladimir Gsovski and assisted by Marin Pundeff
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175 Franks (678) and the English Kingdom (Kingdom of Essex—802 United Kingdom of England with King Egbert—828), while Rurik organized the Moscow principality even later, in 862.

After the unification of the Slavs in the initial stage of Bulgarian statehood, followed the period of united legislation (802—814) which amalgamated the invaders with the conquered local inhabitants. Then came the period of spiritual enlightenment (852—889), during which Christianity was accepted (866) and, in this manner, the complete assimilation 795 of the mixed population was attained. The Bulgarian church 175 was entirely independent from the very outset, both of Rome, and of any of the Eastern churches. This important fact has run like a red streak through the entire history of Bulgaria for 1080 years, from 865 up to 1945, and has helped the formation of the Bulgarian State and its resistance against all encroachments. The church movement has always been one of the paramount problems in the history of the Bulgarians and, in this respect, they differ from other Slavic nations. The Bulgarian church is closely connected with the experience and the life of the nation. It is entirely independent and its actions are determined only by the will of the Bulgarian people. This fact should be appreciated by those who seek to understand the history of Bulgaria.

538 **8. Literature and Cultural Achievements.** The conversion of the Bulgarians to Christianity (866) and their need for church instruction and prayer books gave rise to literary production, which is the beginning of literature for the whole Slavic world. The entire Bulgarian nation celebrates the day of its enlightenment on May 24. This is the holiday commemorating the life of the saintly brothers of Cyril and Methodius of Salonica who made our alphabeth and prepared our eclesiastical books. This is what the noted Russian historian and academician, N. Derjavin, said in 1914, when he was a professor in the Leningrad (Petrograd) university:[1])

„In this way Bulgaria gave the Slavic people their language, upon which the present Slavic culture grew and developed. It was destined to be the first in giving life to the feeling of tribal self-consciousness among the Slavs and to serve,

[1]) N. Derjavin; **The Bulgarian-Serb Relations and the Macedonian Question**; Petrograd (i. e. Leningrad), 1914; (in Russian).

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538 such glorious development that, so far as the wealth of ecclesiastical literary production was concerned, it was able to compete bravely with the choicest Greek and Latin literatures of the time and to excel all other European literatures in that respect."

Prof. Ernest Denis[1]) states the following on the same subject: „The Bulgarian literature reached its golden age under the reign of Simeon and its historic importance was considerable. There was no other western literature in that distant period which contained such enormous quantity of biblical, liturgical and theological works borrowed from the Greeks. They translated the heroic and legendary narratives which were spread all over Europe in the Middle Ages... The Bulgarians were the first to use the old Slavic language and their works, distributed among all the orthodox Slavs, contributed to the establishment of national literature".

In the same work, St. Novakovitch and A Malet[2]) say: „Persecuted in all the countries dominated by Rome the learned Slavs, from 886 on, took refuge in Bulgaria which was the only country capable of protecting them. They formed there a veritable seminary of letters at the begining of the tenth century".

795 **9. Bogomilism.** In two hundred and fifty years (679 — 927), since the coming of the Bulgarians to the Balkan Peninsula, they had already become well nigh the real masters of the Peninsula. Simeon had acquired the title „Tzar of All Bulgarians and Greeks". After his death in 927, however, the Bulgarian State failed to retain the height of its power. The decline was due partly to the rise of the boyars, (nobility) feudal claims. But it was caused also by the appearance of Bogomilism and by the drawn and weary battles. The Bogomils maintained that the church, ikons, ecclesiastical hierarchy, kings, wars, wealth and even human flesh were the works of Satan. Many think that Bogomilism was a contribution by the Bulgarian Slavs to human civilization. A. N. Vsevolski[3]) says: „Through the influence of Bogomilism, the

[1]) In Ernest Lavisse et Alfred Rambaud; Histoire générale du 4-ième siècle à nos jours; 1893. Vol. I, p. 733.

[2]) Ibid Vol. III. p. 903

[3]) Slavianskia Skazania, pp. 146—147; cf. D. Misheff, Rectifications of History, Sofia, 1922, p. 13.

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Slav people introduced in the European civilization, before Huss, their manner of thinking which left lasting traces in all the literature of the Middle Ages".

Ernest Denis says[1]): „The dualist doctrine invaded from Bulgaria not only the Slav countries of the Balkan Peninsula, but also Italy and Southern France. The Cathares and Albigenses were n frequent relations with the Southern Slavs. For a long time the Bogomil doctrines were preached by some of the nobility, by kings and even by bishops in some provinces of the peninsula. They dominated Bosnia, in spite of all the efforts of the Popes and the Hungarian kings".

Ed. Gibbon says[2]) „The Bulgarians spread their branches over the face of Europe, united in common hatred of idolatry and of Rome, they were bound by a form of episcopal and presbyterian government; their various sects were distinguished by some fainter or darker shades of theology; but they generally agreed on two principles: the contempt for the old testament and the denial of the body of Christ, either on the cross or in the Eucharist. A confession of simple worship and blameless manners is extorted from their enemies; and so high was their standard of perfection, that the increasing congregations were divided into two classes of disciples, those who practised and those who aspired..."

Simonde de Sismondi[3]) makes the following statement: „Along with their goods, the Bulgarian merchants brought down the valley of the Danube the first seeds of the Reformation. Their doctrine, carried into Bohemia, cleared the road for John Huss and Jerome of Prague".

10. Military Power. We prefer to dwell on the cultural activity of the Bulgarians rather than on their military achievements, although that these achievements were quite significant because the Bulgarian armies reached the walls of Constantinople several times. Bulgarians exercised always great pressure on the Byzantine Empire. Bulgarian history is nothing less than a ceaseless struggle for Slavic supremacy against Byzantine authority.

[1]) Opus cit. vol. I. p. 733—734.

[2]) Ed. Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; vol. IV, p. 87; New York, American Publ. Corp.

[3]) Histoire des Republiques Italiennes, vol II, pp. 100—101.

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tures, and the Russians could legitimately conclude that the warm friendship suddenly manifested in both countries when Red troops marched in was not wholly sincere. 648

The United States made a serious effort to insure effective democratic government in the Balkan region. For example, with Great Britain, it protested against the manner in which the Bulgarian elections of November, 1945, were conducted. The voting had led to a scarcely contested triumph for the pro-Communist Fatherland Front. The matter was debated at the Moscow Conference which convened in the next month, and the Russians indicated that possession was just about the whole of the law, although they did agree to include representatives of other parties in the government. From that time on, Soviet domination of the two countries slowly and implacably became more complete, and any likelihood that Western intervention could alter the course of events evaporated like a morning mist.

Except Greece, Bulgaria was the country in which the Greek Orthodox Church was strongest. Moslems were the only minority of notable size, Jews and Roman Catholics and Protestants being negligible in number.* Accordingly, as soon as the Russians had taken over and begun to establish a collectivist economy, the Orthodox Church was an object of immediate attention. There was a maneuver which has been a topic for speculative comment ever since. For many years the hostility between Bulgaria and Greece which had its roots in the struggle for Bulgarian independence had manifested itself also in the 648 [62] 795

* Prewar population statistics for Bulgaria reveal that 83.5 per cent were Greek Orthodox; 14.3, Mohammedan; 0.9, Jewish; and 0.8, Roman Catholic. Postwar (1948) estimates for Rumania indicate that 72 per cent of the population were Orthodox; 10, Roman Catholics according to the Greek rite; 7, Roman Catholics; 4.6, Calvinists; 2.3, Jews; and 1.6, Lutherans. Other Protestant groups, including Unitarians and Baptists, constituted about 1 per cent. Most Rumanian Catholics and Protestants belonged to German or Hungarian minority groups.

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religious organization. Faithful to its Byzantine origins, the Greek Orthodox Church recognized (as we have previously noted) the Patriarch of Constantinople as its head, but accepted the Hierarchy of Greece as the center of ecclesiastical power. This Hierarchy had, however, ruled that the Bulgarian Orthodox Church was a schismatic body, and all pleas that its decision be altered fell on deaf ears. When the war ended, the Bulgarian Holy Synod met and elected the Metropolitan of Sofia president and head of the Church with the title Exarch Stephan I. He had long fished in the troubled waters of Bulgarian politics and was widely known as an anti-Communist, but now he began to manifest a zealous ardor in support of Communism which virtually knew no bounds. When he made representations to the Constantinople Patriarch that the curse of schism be lifted from the Bulgarian Church, an affirmative answer was received, owing no doubt to the weakness of the Greeks and the peril in which they at that time found themselves.

Much going and coming ensued. Stephan journeyed to Kiev, Moscow, and Leningrad. In turn the Patriarch of Moscow, despite his eighty years, made an official visit to Bulgaria. Not a few students of the situation reason that a plan had been concocted to make the Patriarch of Moscow head of all the Eastern Orthodox Churches, conferring a new and signal distinction upon the Russian capital, which would thus become not only the world center of Communism but also the "Third Rome," and manifestly rival the Vatican in importance as a seat of ecclesiastical authority. The plan—if it actually existed—soon ceased to bear any relation to reality; but it is interesting to conjecture as to what might have happened if the Greeks had been absorbed into the Russian orbit.

All this had a complex and sometimes confusing historical background. The services rendered by the Orthodox clergy

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to the cause of Bulgarian independence, and to the resurrection of the Bulgarian language as a medium of literary expression, gave the Church universally recognized prestige. After 1878, when national freedom was gained, the Orthodox Church was a State institution, and the members of its Hierarchy were public officials. A portion of the national budget was set aside to support the Church, which in addition owned considerable property largely derived from bequests. The case was comparable with that of a large state university in the United States. Salaries of professors in such a university are paid out of the state treasury; but it may own not inconsiderable wealth in its own right, is permitted to collect fees from students and to charge for other services rendered. When one considers the rural character of Bulgaria and the poverty of most of its 6,000,000-odd people, the financial strength of Orthodoxy reflected in such magnificent structures as the Archiepiscopal Palace in Sofia is genuinely impressive. Clergymen of all ranks officiated on public occasions; and, though the spirituality of the Bulgarian people may well have been far from deep, they prized the Church as the primary agency of the national culture.

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Bulgarian education enjoyed a well merited repute, and the theological schools established after 1878 ranked high among the country's institutions of higher learning. The training given consisted in the main of what we should call "general education," theology being taught as a field of specialization. The result was that many leading citizens were graduates of these schools. Religious instruction, normally by laymen, was likewise included in the curricula of elementary and secondary schools. About 4,000 churches served the people, under the direction of the Holy Synod. This body also fostered breadth of view, and held membership in the World Council of Churches prior to the war. On the whole, the religious situation

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against Protestants in any satellite country, though to be sure Protestant Churches had suffered grievously in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland. The pastors, none of whom had occupied a position of eminence, were confronted with a lengthy list of charges. In particular they had, the Public Prosecutor contended, given military, economic, and political information to representatives of hostile foreign powers. They were also accused of having "spread malicious rumors about Russia." Those indicted—the Reverend Basil Ziapkov, for example—made confessions of the length desired and pleaded for mercy. The Court pronounced sentences of varying severity.

Manifestly this trial was also a blow struck at the prestige of the United States, from which most of the support for the Protestant congregations had come. Its primary effect was, no doubt, that the curtain was rung down on any hopes Bulgarian citizens might have that diplomatic intervention by the West would blunt the edge of the Soviet sickle, or that Washington could defend the interests of Americans in regions under Russian domination. How complete the resulting loss of morale was can be deduced from the official statements issued by the other Churches on the subject of the ordeal to which Protestantism had been subjected. The Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church declared, for example:

> In accordance with our Church's traditional solicitude for fostering the aspirations of the people and maintaining loyalty to the State, the Holy Synod has always exhorted its clergy to look upon themselves as preachers of the Divine Word and as guardians of the Holy Spirit, and to remain aloof from all political influences hostile to the country and its people. We must add that the pastors of the Holy Orthodox Church have consistently obeyed our admonition. Not one of them has been prosecuted by the authorities on account of religious activities.
>
> The Holy Synod strongly condemns all subversive activities carried

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735 on by the faithful, all actions detrimental to our People's Republic,
659 and anything which may threaten the independence and liberty of our people. And we condemn such things even more strongly when they are carried on by those who profess other creeds.

The statements made by the Catholic bishops, both of the Latin and of the Greek rite, contained professions of loyalty to the government but did not comment on the trial of their Protestant brethren.

659 The Catholic Church wielded an influence in Bulgaria which
687 was wholly disproportionate to its size. Fewer than ten persons
793 in a thousand professed to belong to this Church, which of course was also hampered by the division according to the two rites. But Catholics had played a stirring part in the struggle for liberation from Turkish rule, and so their heroes were eminent in the nation's song and story. Educational institutions created and developed by members of religious orders were likewise held in high esteem, and many of the graduates were prominent in the civil service and the professions. These institutions have been nationalized, and the Church itself is circumscribed by the laws affecting religion. During 1949, the Catholic Bishops acceded to the government's request and sent a message to the United Nations affirming the existence of religious freedom in Bulgaria. Subsequently the lot of both clergy and laity grew steadily worse; but the first spectacular and drastic action taken against the Church was the arrest of a bishop, more than a score of priests, and a number of laymen, on the usual charge of conspiring with a hostile foreign power. The Bishop and three priests were sentenced to death for high treason, and twenty-four priests and twelve laymen received prison sentences. Therewith an almost mortal blow was struck at the life and organized activity of the Church.*

000 * Most of the more than half a million Mohammedans in Bulgaria were of Turkish descent. During 1950 the government began deporting them to Turkey,

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in 1900 about 12,000 (according to V. Cintula). In 1891 the statistics numbered them at /201/ 23,000; but it confused other Slavs with the Bulgars, for example the Serbs of Krasso.

In America, Valjavec figured on 4,000 Bulgars, but obviously this is too few, for in the most recent statistics the Bulgars are always placed with the Serbs. We have seen that in Russia statistics for 1897 enumerated 172,659.

It is in Turkey that estimates are most difficult. For Macedonia I have followed the figures of Kanchov, in regard to his opinion upon the Macedonian problem.

Cvijic has estimated the number of Slavs in the vilayets of Kosovo, of Salonica, and of Bitolj to be 1,300,000 (450,000; 500,000; 340,000). Brankov and Skopalski have figured on 1,172,000 Bulgars; in Turkish Rumelia I have counted the Pomaks among the Bulgars. In the vilayet of Adrianople, Mach estimated the number of Bulgars at 370,000 of the Orthodox religion and 115,000 of the Mohammedan religion.

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According to a census conducted by Hilmi Pasha and reported by M. Rene Pinon (of which the results are far from being exact), there were in the vilayet of Kosovo 164,476 Patriarchists, 184,912 Exarchists (1), 420,388 Mohammedans; in the vilayet of Bitolj, 309,759 Greek Patriarchists, /202/ 11,301 Rumanians, 8,461 Serbs, 178,527 Exarchists, 509,307 Mohammedans; in the vilayet of Salonica, 311,982 Greek Patriarchists, 24,377 Rumanians, 244,723 Exarchists, 531,431 Mohammedans. For these three vilayets, Monsieur Pinon, accepting the old statistics of certain districts, gave a total of 3,267,265 souls, of whom 1,795,359 were Mohammedans and only about 600,000 Bulgarian Exarchists. He counted 850,000 Greek, Rumanian, and Serbian Patriarchists; but of this number the Serbs make up only a very insignificant total.

1. Spiritual subjects of the Bulgarian Exarch of Constantinople, otherwise Bulgars.

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Other statistical data, for well known reasons, can be applied only to the Bulgars of the Kingdom. This is the only country which provides statistical data. We shall study them here on the basis of the work of Vrbanic, who goes back to the census of 1888.

000 work of Vrbanic, who goes back to the census of 1888.

S.P. B. 163 [162] He presents[1] the following results:

Among the Bulgars the number of men is 1,000 for every 965 women; the males show an excess of births of 54.2%; the ratio between single persons to married persons is for men, 53%; for women 41.9% (4.4% widowers). The birth rate is 36.36 per 1,000; it is below that of the Serbs; on the contrary, the death rate is less than among these, only 18. (compare the figures given above in Section 31). In Bulgaria S.P. B. [165] very few infants die during the first year. They have the lowest infant mortality of any among the South-Slavs /203/ (8.3% only, against 15.4% in Dalmatia, 16.3% in Serbia, 21.2% in Croatia). As a result of this peculiarity, the coefficient of the excess of births over deaths is, if Jirecek is to be believed, as favorable as in Serbia, it represents 1.83. For the years 1881-1887, Sarafov found an increase of 1.85 (during this period there were born 100 boys for 89.7 girls); for the period 1890-1900, the coefficient was, it seems, slightly less. More recently, Iurkevich suggested the figure of 1.5 for the north of Bulgaria and of 1.2 for the south.

S.P. B. 161 According to Popov, the population density is 38.8 inhabitants per square kilometer.

S.P. B. 795 From the religious viewpoint the Bulgars belong to the Eastern Orthodox Church. They have a church of their own whose head, called The Exarch, lives at Orta-koi (now Ivailovgrad) near Constantinople. Along with the Orthodox majority, one finds two dissident groups. The first of these is the Catholic Bulgars, or Paulitians (Pavlikiani). They speak the eastern dialect and live in the districts of Nikopol, of Svishtov, in seven villages in the outskirts of Plovdiv (Philippopolis). There is also a Catholic community at Berdavski Geran, near Byala Slatina, and another, that of Gostilia, near Oryakhovo (district of Vratsa). All of them originated in the region of Plovdiv or Philippopolis, which was formerly their center. They formerly composed a whole series of communities between Plovdiv and /204/ Nikopol. It is from these that there came the colonies of Bulgars who settled in Hungary (Vinga, Besenov), and who are Catholics.

S.P. B. 795 101 Another rather sizeable section is composed of the Bulgars who, under Turkish domination, embraced Islam. They are called Pomaks.

[1] [i.e. Vrbanic, op. cit. n6, p. 125 -- Analyst]

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They have settled by preference in the Rhodope (Grk., Rodope), where they constitute a rather large group between Plovdiv and Salonica. They are met with here and there to the north of the Balkans in the region of Lovech, Pleven (Plevna), especially between the Vid and Panega Rivers, to the south of Pleven. In the Kingdom of Bulgaria their number has greatly diminished; for, as a result of their Turkish sympathies, they have since 1878 been in perpetual conflict with the other Bulgars. The latest statistics numbered 20,644 of them in Bulgaria, of whom 17,055 were in the district of Plovdiv (Philippopolis) and 2,837 in that of Pleven.

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From the viewpoint of education, the Bulgars are not very much advanced, which is explained by the difficult conditions in which they have lived, deprived of all the advantages of civilization. They are now making an effort to make up for lost time. According to the latest statistics the number of literate persons in the principality was an average of 28.4%. The districts may be placed in the following order:

Ruse 38.5%; Shumla 35.9%; Varna 34%; Trnovo /205/ 34%; Plovdiv (Philippopolis) 29.6%; Burgas 29.4%; Sofia 28.8%; Stara Zagora 28.3%; Pleven 23.1%; Kustendil 20.1%; Vidin 19.8%; Vratsa 19%. The highest degree of education is found naturally in the regions of the great cities: 60% at Sofia, Ruse, and Varna; 49% at Plovdiv; 47% at Kotel and at Shumla; 37% at Kazanluk. The least literate areas are those of Radomir (20%), Tsaribrod (now Dimitrovgrad) (19%), Kyzilagatch (19%), Berkovitsa (16%), Kula (14%), Belogradchik (13%), Ferdinandovo (13%).

S.P. B. 197 101

S 38. Internal Differentation.--The Bulgars are divided into three groups from the point of view of language.

1). That of the western dialect: it is bounded on the east by a line which starts from the confluence of the Vid and the Danube and runs towards Salonica across the regions of Nikopol, Pleven, Lovech, Teteven, Pirdop, Novo Selo, Panagyurishte, Ikhtiman, Chepino, Rezlog, Nevrokop, Melnik, Petrich, Demir Hissar (now Siderokastron), Seres, and Salonica.

2). The eastern group is divided into two branches:

A. That of the northeast where the people bear the general name of Zagortsi (Mountaineers), or Khertsoi*, or Poliantsi*.

B. That of the southeast, or branch of the Rhodope, whose

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local designations. The peoples are called Mervatsi who are settled between the Struma and the Rhodope Mountains in the area of Serrai, Demir Hissar (now Siderokastron), Melnik, Drama, Nevrokop (now Delchev) and Bratsigovo. In western Macedonia there is a region called Mala Reka, "The Little River," whose inhabitants have received the name of Miak*. They call the inhabitants of Kichevo, Bitolia, Prilep and Tito Veles the Brsiak: (compare the Greek Bersetai). Among the other Macedonian names, Kanchov mentions the Esti on the right bank of the Black Drin, the Kekovtsi in the region of Popolie, the Pulivakovtsi in the western part of the plain of Salonica, the Ketskari, the Uliufs. Let us also mention /208/ the Touriaki and the Torlaki whose name is also applied by the inhabitants of Sofia to the inhabitants of the regions of Pirot and of Tsaribrod, the Tokuntsi, the Niniovtsi, the Marachi between the Osem and the Isker (now Sibir), etc.

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The Mohammedan Bulgars who live near the sources of the Arda are called Ashrians; this name comes from the ancient form Agariane, the children of Agar (1); between the Dospat and the Mesta are found the Tseshtentsi and, below the Chardagh, the Torbechi.

1. On this name see the index of my Chronicle supposedly by Nestor. Translator.

S.P. B. 101

We have spoken above (Section 33) of the names of the old Bulgars. An enigmatic appellation is also given them. They are called the Khrsoi, and this word generally means an uncouth man, a rustic. They are spread out between the Black Sea and the Isker (now Sibir) and also in the region of Vidin and to the south as far as the Starndja Planina (Mountains). They speak the dialect of the northeast and may be distinguished by their special costume. Likewise, the costume of the women is distinguished by the somber color of the woolen gown called sukman.

The immigrants from the Balkans who come into the regions of Shumen, or Razgrad, and of Ruse are called by the natives "The Blacks," because of the color of their breeches. In western Bulgaria "the wearers of white" and "the wearers of black" are distinguished. Other sobriquets are due to the cut of the breeches.

We owe special mention to the Schopi. They inhabit especially the mountainous region of Kustendil, Kratovo, Radomir, Breznik and

1 [cf. cat. 116, pp. 113-118 -- Analyst]

S.P.
B Sofia. According to Broch they start directly on the Serbian frontier,
101 at Kriva Feia, to the east of Varna, and are distinguished from the other Bulgars by their costume (white breeches) and their physignomy. Some observers see in them an ancient Slavified Thracian tribe, the Sapaioi. Thus some people have found in the name of the Ruptsi the former Greek name of Merope, which has lost its first unaccented syllable.

Moreover, the Bulgars of the east call even the inhabitants of Vratsa and of Trun, by the name of Schopi even though they themselves do not use the name. If one were to believe Miletic, it is in the the village of Mechka, on the road from Nikopol to Pleven, that the Khrtsoi stop and the Schopi begin. Formerly the Schopi did not cross Isker (now Sibir).

B
563
101 Let us again mention that in the various sections of Bulgaria there exist communes which are called Arnaut, or in other words Albanian (Arnaoutlar), for example in the districts of Varna, Provadia, Razgrad, and Kermen. The inhabitants of these villages are partly of an origin neither Slavo-Albanian nor Greek. They are called the Arnaut because they came from Macedonia, notably from the regions of Kostur and of Voden. Such are the pretended Arnaut of Silistria, /210/ Razgrad, and Bratsigovo. On the contrary, the often repeated thesis which attributes a Slavic origin to the Tsakoniens and to the Mainotes of southern Greece must be considered to be without foundation.

B
795 In the northeastern section of Bulgaria live the Gagauz. They are Christians who speak Turkish. A certain number of Gagauz speak Bulgarian and declare that they are Bulgars. Some persons consider them to be the descendants of Turkized Bulgars.

The Gagauz of the coast are settled at Varna and in some communes at Kestrich, Kara-Hussein, Djevizliji, Djaperliji, Ala Klise Giaur-Suiutchuk, Eni Kioi, Kavarna, and Biela. The Bulgarian Gagauz are settled in several communes in the outskirts of Varna and of Provadia and especially in the village of Beidaut in the Dobrudja. There is no agreement as to the origin of the Gagauz. Jirecek considers them as the descendants of the Cumaeans, Mochov as the Karakalpak of the Russian chroniclers, Zanetov as the ancient Bulgars of the Volga.

B
101 Many Bulgarian Gagauz to be found also in Bessarabia, in the

5: Kemp E-4, 5 (1926-1933)1935
EF6 Serbs EF6
Croats EF4
Bulgaria EE1
Contemporary Macedonians EF8

S 754 This was the curse of St Petka and St Nedelja upon Vuk Vučković for robbing a monastery. After sickening for twelve years his mother asked him for what sin he was chastened, and no sooner had he confessed the truth than his soul slipped out of his bones. He was buried but the earth heaved him up out of her, and the sea refused his corpse. His mother took his body and put it into a cannon and so blew him to fragments and his dust was scattered. We have already given enough examples to show that the symptoms described are not likely to have been understood originally as mere poetical hyperbole, but as sound folk-pathology.

C B CM S 776 753 795 The *vile* (*samovile*, *samodive*) are nature-spirits, and they are of different kinds according to the places which they inhabit: trees, mountains, sweet waters, seas, clouds and so on. They are frequently called 'the good ones', 'the sweet ones'. In some parts they are called *vještice*, *coprnice*, the usual names for witch. Sometimes they are decidedly evil spirits, sometimes good, sometimes merely capricious or envious; but they are always connected with disease, with its origin and with its cure. They can heal the wounds given by their own arrows.

The diseases brought by these nymphs are typically fevers, perhaps because of their association with watery places, as well as aches in the bones, madness and epilepsy. A *vila* can take a man's shadow from him, and he wanders as aimlessly as a headless fly. Perhaps *vrbanac*, as a name for a skin disease, has been coined by a popular analogy with the willow tree (*vrba*), which figures largely in cures and in *vila* mythology. Diseases of this name are sometimes said to be *vila* sent. In Macedonia, North and West Bulgaria, in the Dalmatian hinterland and elsewhere a complete *vila* cult can be found at least in traces, with sacred springs visited and petitioned on certain days, offerings made to the spirits and special intermediaries between them and ordinary men. Some features of these local cults and survivals are reminiscent of those known to be connected directly with the cult and tendance of the dead ancestors. The *vile*, as we have remarked, are also connected with winds. A local name for them in

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6: Shuster S-4 (no date) 1954 El Europe
Bulgaria EE1

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793

religious organization. Faithful to its Byzantine origins, the Greek Orthodox Church recognized (as we have previously noted) the Patriarch of Constantinople as its head, but accepted the Hierarchy of Greece as the center of ecclesiastical power. This Hierarchy had, however, ruled that the Bulgarian Orthodox Church was a schismatic body, and all pleas that its decision be altered fell on deaf ears. When the war ended, the Bulgarian Holy Synod met and elected the Metropolitan of Sofia president and head of the Church with the title Exarch Stephan I. He had long fished in the troubled waters of Bulgarian politics and was widely known as an anti-Communist, but now he began to manifest a zealous ardor in support of Communism which virtually knew no bounds. When he made representations to the Constantinople Patriarch that the curse of schism be lifted from the Bulgarian Church, an affirmative answer was received, owing no doubt to the weakness of the Greeks and the peril in which they at that time found themselves.

Much going and coming ensued. Stephan journeyed to Kiev, Moscow, and Leningrad. In turn the Patriarch of Moscow, despite his eighty years, made an official visit to Bulgaria. Not a few students of the situation reason that a plan had been concocted to make the Patriarch of Moscow head of all the Eastern Orthodox Churches, conferring a new and signal distinction upon the Russian capital, which would thus become not only the world center of Communism but also the "Third Rome," and manifestly rival the Vatican in importance as a seat of ecclesiastical authority. The plan—if it actually existed—soon ceased to bear any relation to reality; but it is interesting to conjecture as to what might have happened if the Greeks had been absorbed into the Russian orbit.

All this had a complex and sometimes confusing historical background. The services rendered by the Orthodox clergy